

# May Yohe (Lady Francis Hope)

## Followed Its Owners



Photograph of May Yohe and Putnam Bradlee Strong in native Japanese costumes while they were living in Japan.

May Yohe and Captain Strong at the famous Roman dinner they gave in Japan. The dinner lasted three days and nights, and included the rarest of wines and cordials. It cost \$20,000, which May Yohe paid. Guests included famous stage beauties, wealthy tourists and young diplomatic attaches, as well as native officials. Soon after this bacchanalian event May Yohe's money ran out and Captain Strong began pawning her diamonds.



wanted to give me alluring contracts, Captain Strong announced that he, too, must make a trip to Paris, and expressed the hope he might see me there. Lord Francis spoke up at once: "Why don't you two run over on the same boat? You will be company for each other, and I will know May is in good hands."

Captain Strong expressed delight, but doubted that I would want to be "bored" with him. I was quite willing, however, and so we went to Paris on the same boat, Captain Strong very attentive and kind.

In Paris he sent me candies and flowers every day. My cousin came over to help me with the contracts, and Captain Strong took him into his hotel, and now, with my cousin present to make a party, took us everywhere—to all the best restaurants and theatres. He just showered me with his courtesies, and as we saw more of each other I began to notice more and more a sort of sadness in his eyes, an ineffable wistful, longing, whenever he looked at me. Tom saw it, too, and joked me about it. I began to feel sorry for the Captain, for I thought perhaps he really had become smitten with me during our many hours together, and was trying to hide his feelings. My readers will see how gradually the ground went out from

under me, and how cleverly Captain Strong pulled the strings that tugged at my heart. Always he stood before me, my ideal of the devoted, impulsive, romantic man I would like my husband to be. Meantime Lord Francis was paying little attention to me—letting me go about my own affairs, always kind, but never exhibiting any of the little tenderesses which are so dear to a woman.

After my return to London, having refused to sign the contracts offered me, my agents in New York cabled me to come over for the "Giddy Throng." Lord Francis said he could not come, but for me to go along and return for a while, if I could, before rehearsals. I said good-by to Captain Strong in the presence of my husband and boarded the boat. What was my surprise when the boat sailed to meet Captain Strong on deck. He laughingly said he could not bear to say good-by to me so shortly, and that he was going as far as Cherbourg and stretch the ceremony of parting that far anyway. This just struck me as a rather delicious escapade, and I entered into the spirit of it.



May Yohe in her Japanese home in Yokohama, where, she and Mr. Strong were happy for a time. This villa was originally built for King Edward when, as Prince of Wales, he made his famous trip around the world.

"Why, Captain," I said laughingly, "you make me feel quite like a guilty wife—as if I were doing something delightfully wicked. I just tremble at the thought of what my husband would say if he knew you had stolen back aboard the boat."

Captain Strong sobered immediately. He looked at me with the familiar sadness and longing in his eyes. "I wonder if being so wicked as you play at being would really be delightful—with me as the other part of the wicked bargain!" he said. I was startled. "I mean it, Lady Maysie," he said. "I'd like it awfully, if you and I were eloping now, and you were leaving your husband behind and were to become my wife. But I mustn't talk that way. Forgive me. I'm getting off at Cherbourg, and you mustn't think of what I've said again."

But I did think of it again. I couldn't help it. When I got to New York I found a cablegram awaiting me for every day at sea. At my hotel there were great banks of flowers in the apartments I had reserved, and among them was the florist's card with Captain Strong's name written on it. Every morning with daylight came a new cablegram—each just saying "Good morning." And every afternoon came a new bunch of flowers with a card on which the florist had written, under cabled instructions from Captain Strong, "Good afternoon."

Presently I found myself thinking more about Captain Strong's whereabouts, what he was doing, what he might be thinking about, etc., than of the same things in connection with my husband. When I caught myself at this errantry I put such vagrant thoughts aside, but it was such a joy in my life, this having someone who seemed to be thinking of just me all the time, that I was not as firm with myself as I should have been.

There came a time when I was very ill with pneumonia. Meantime Lord Francis had come to America with his brother, the Duke, for some tarpon fishing in Tampa Bay, Florida. I had never written Captain Strong even so much as a postal card, but a friend of his in New York, who called upon me occasionally, must have cabled him that I was ill. As fast as a boat could get to America the Captain came over, and much to my astonishment walked into my room at the hospital one morning as early as the nurse would admit him. Of course, he brought a huge cluster of flowers, and was almost broken-hearted when the nurse assured him there was nothing he could do for me. He asked if he might not come each night and sit on a bench in the hall outside my door—just to make cure, he said, he would be close if some emergency should arise. The nurse smiled and told him she was afraid his presence, watching, waiting, would worry me. When he had gone the nurse said to me, "That is the kind of man God ought to give every woman."

I only laughed a little, but I found myself agreeing with her. The Captain's apparent deep concern over my condition, his eagerness to sit on that bench outside my door all night long, willing to just sit there with the knowledge that he was close to me, even if not with me, was more soothing to me than I would admit. I thought of it to Lord Francis.

My physicians had begun to fear for my recovery. They had wired my husband as follows: "Wife dangerous condition. Recovery not assured. She asks you hurry here." The reply read: "Sorry can't come now. Midst of fishing season. Departure would seriously disarrange trip. Advice of developments. HOPE."

I dropped the telegram to the floor. That instant I became the property, body, soul and mind, of Putnam Bradlee Strong—although neither he nor I knew it yet.

Captain Strong read the telegram. He came over to me, put his arms around me for the first time, and said: "Poor Maysie—I'm sorry. But I knew it all the time. When you are well you are going with me."

And when I was well I did go with him—to the ends of the earth, sacrificing everything a woman holds dear, only to learn that it was all a clever game, that Captain Strong was after, not me, but my half million dollars' worth of jewelry.

We decided to elope to Japan. Captain Strong had left France without leave, and was being sought by General Corbin, the Adjutant-General. So we went to San Francisco secretly, assuming the names of Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Hastings, and taking with us eighteen trunks, five dogs and two servants. I will tell later something of our experiences on this flight across the continent.

When we arrived in Japan we set about finding a home for our honeymoon at once. Captain Strong had a little money. He explained that he could not draw his army pay, as he was, practically, a deserter, and that it had not been safe for him to get any from his family—but that he would later. I had plenty for a while, however, something like fifty thousand dollars in cash.

We found a house on the bluff outside Yokohama, a beautiful little palace-bungalow, that had been built for King Edward when he visited Japan as the Prince of Wales. We paid \$300 a month rent for the house, which included beautiful furniture, which we soon supplemented with rare ivories, carvings and other beautiful things.

When I paid my first visit to the place, after Captain Strong had arranged the lease, the door was opened by the cutest little Japanese maid servant I had ever seen. I fell in love with her on the spot and adopted her. Later I brought her to the States with me, and she has been as my daughter ever since. She is married now to a wealthy Japanese in New York. Her name then was Yori Kamatezu.

We gave many beautiful banquets at our house on the bluff. Captain Strong liked playing host—with my money—and he had many friends in Japan. He had begun negotiations with the army authorities, through his family, for a discharge, and was able to see his friends and entertain them. Our house became the Mecca of diplomatic officials and tourists. One of our entertainments was a wonderful Roman dinner—served after the vogue of Nero, beginning at sundown and lasting through three whole days and nights. To this we invited many fascinating people, some of the stage beauties then visiting in Japan, some of the younger diplomatic men and some of the Europeanized Japanese officials.

We all dressed in Japanese costumes. The rarest of wines and cordials were served, and to each guest Captain Strong and I gave a little diamond as a favor. The dinner cost us something like \$20,000.

We spent a great deal of time running about in jinnicks, visiting the old temples and being entertained by the European colonists. Captain Strong was everything a sweetheart-husband should be. He could not hold himself from spending money, and I gave him freely of what I had. When he couldn't think of anything else to do he would walk into a cafe, shoot out all the lights and tell the proprietor to send a bill for the damages to me. I paid, and thought it was great fun. Once to amuse him I put on all my jewels and rode along Theatre street in Yokohama during a temple celebration blazing with diamonds and pearls and rubies.

When we began to run out of money the Captain came to me one day and said he knew a friend who had plenty, but who was not close enough to him to make him a loan. If I would let him take a jewel or two, he said, he would pawn it with this friend and recover it later when his money came from the States. I told him to take whatever he wanted. He took the \$50,000 diamond necklace Captain Holford had given me and went away with it. He came back later with \$9,000, saying he had pledged the necklace with his friend for what he thought we would need. Later I discovered that he had sold the necklace to a Japanese who had only \$9,000 to his name. Captain Strong told him to produce the money and he wouldn't bother about going any further.

That was the beginning. It was not long before my last little diamond had gone, transmuted into money, into Captain Strong's pocket.

(To be Continued Next Sunday)



May Yohe's adopted Japanese daughter, Miss Yori Komatsu.